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THE COUNCIL ON COLLEGE-LEVEL EXAMINATIONS AND THE COMPREHENSIVE COLLEGE TESTS.

BY- BURNS, RICHARD L.
AMERICAN PERSONNEL AND GUIDANCE ASSN., WASH., D.C.

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THE TESTS ARE MEANS AVAILABLE TO THE INDIVIDUAL TO SEEK RECOGNITION FOR LEARNING OBTAINED FROM A CORRESPONDENCE COURSE, PRIVATE INSTRUCTION, TV COURSES, ON-THE-JOB TRAINING, GROUP DISCUSSIONS, AND PRIVATE LECTURES. THE COUNCIL BELIEVES THAT ACADEMIC CREDIT BY EXAMINATION FOR THESE UNAFFILIATED STUDENTS IS THE KEY TO THE FLEXIBILITY, INNOVATION, AND INDEPENDENT STUDY THAT WILL BE ESSENTIAL IN EDUCATION IN THE FUTURE. OTHER USES OF THE TESTS INCLUDE ASSISTANCE WITH THE EVALUATION OF TRANSFER STUDENTS, EVALUATION OF FOREIGN STUDENT EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUNDS, AND INSTITUTION SELF-EVALUATION. FIVE GENERAL EXAMINATIONS COVERING ENGLISH COMPOSITION, HUMANITIES, MATHEMATICS, NATURAL SCIENCE, AND SOCIAL SCIENCE-HISTORY ARE DESIGNED TO MEASURE UNDERGRADUATE ACHIEVEMENT. FRESHMAN AND SOPHOMORE NORMS ARE BASED ON A SAMPLE OF ENROLLEES IN 2- AND 4-YEAR COLLEGES. SPECIFIC SUBJECT EXAMINATIONS ARE DEVELOPED FOR WIDELY TAUGHT UNDERGRADUATE COURSES AND MAY BE USED TO AWARD CREDIT FOR THE COURSE IN QUESTION. THESE NORMS ARE BASED ON COLLEGE STUDENTS COMPLETING COURSES IN THE AREAS BEING TESTED. THIS SPEECH WAS PREPARED FOR THE AMERICAN PERSONNEL AND GUIDANCE ASSOCIATION CONVENTION (WASHINGTON, D.C., SESSION 290, APRIL 6, 1966). (RM)

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SPEECH

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Title - THE COUNCIL ON COLLEGE-LEVEL EXAMINATIONS AND THE COMPREHENSIVE COLLEGE TESTS

Author - Richard L. Burns, Director, Educational Testing Service
Princeton, New Jersey

Introduction

This panel is dealing with what Peter Rossi in his preface to the book, Volunteers for Learning refers to as "one of the quiet [illegible] of America's educational establishment." Rossi goes on to indicate the reasons for this characterization; "Adult education does not figure in our current controversies: No one has raised the issue 'why Uncle John can't read'. Adult education has no football or basketball teams, no panty raids or sit-in demonstrations. School bond or school board elections do not center around whether there are frills or essentials in the evening classes given in the local high school; indeed, adult education is largely financed out of tuition. National leaders do not hold conferences on where we are going to get the teachers to run our Bible classes. And there is no problem of dropouts in adult education. Dropouts are expected."

But, as this volume goes on to point out and amply document, adult education is a major sector in terms of individuals involved. Johnstone and Rivera, the authors, estimate, on the basis of an extensive survey, that there are approximately 25 million adults in this country, more than one in five, who engage in some form of education in a year. Of these, 17 million were enrolled in courses on a part-time basis, 2.5 million were full-time students and close to nine million were engaged in independent study.

We can expect, further, that this sector of our education will continue to grow in stature, importance, and numbers. The growing effects of computers and automation and their relation to increased leisure time and problems of unemployment, retraining and re-education give ample evidence to this prediction. Johnstone and Rivera feel that we can expect an "adult education explosion" in the next decade.

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While much of this educational experience is conducted in regular classroom settings, a great deal is not. Indeed, Johnstone and Rivera, estimate that, without counting the extensive amount of self-study in the home, about half of all courses taken were outside a classroom setting. Correspondence courses, private instruction, TV courses, on-the-job training, group discussions, and public lectures in total accounted for a large portion of this learning experience. In fact, most adults seek their educational experience outside the regular school system. Johnstone and Rivera found this true in a ratio of about two to one.

Obviously, much of this education is not of a college-level nor taken with any concern for future formal college work or a college degree. A significant portion, however, is. If this is the case what means are available to the individual to seek recognition of this learning? A. A. Liverwright, Director of the Center for the Study of Liberal Education for Adults, has stated, "It is our opinion (the Center's) that, especially with adults, experience or other independent learning may be equivalent to hours spent in the classroom and may serve to fulfill part, if indeed, not all, of the requirements for the baccalaureate degree."

These facts and ideas on the nature of adult learning experiences and its expected growth suggest the basis for the concerns of this panel. Are there ways in which this adult learning experience, however it is obtained, can be converted into currency that will be acceptable to the formal educational community? My purpose this afternoon is to describe briefly to you an attempt that is currently under way to provide an answer to this question on a national basis.

The Council on College-Level Examinations

This effort is being made by the College Entrance Examination Board acting in part from a base of earlier effort expended by the Educational Testing Service. It may be well to review quickly some of the background that led to the Board's involvement in this area.

The ETS interest in this area was first demonstrated by a conference held at ETS and sponsored jointly by ETS and the Carnegie Corporation in 1957 to discuss the need and feasibility of a program of college level tests. By 1964, after other conferences, action by an Advisory Board and the ETS Board of Trustees, a program of tests called the Comprehensive College Tests had been developed and made available to colleges and universities for a variety of purposes including credit by examination.

During this same period the Committee for Institutional Cooperation of the Big Ten and the University of Chicago were concerned with some of the same problems and had received from the Carnegie Corporation a substantial grant to undertake the development and operation of a college-level testing program. The CIC found themselves unable to carry out this mission and

eventually turned back the Carnegie grant with the recommendation that the College Board might be the best agency to be concerned with this activity. An Interim Council for the Comprehensive College Tests, established to advise ETS on the operation of the Comprehensive College Tests, made a similar recommendation with regard to policy control of the new ETS program.

The College Board too had been re-examining its traditional role of concern primarily with the transition from high school to college and its trustees had authorized an investigation into the question of extending Board services throughout the undergraduate years. A report was subsequently prepared by Mr. Jack Arbolino of the Board, entitled, A REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMINATION BOARD: THE COUNCIL ON COLLEGE-LEVEL EXAMINATIONS. As a result of this report a Council was approved and appointed and the College Board began to concern itself with the problems of students who wished to validate college-level learning experience obtained outside the college classroom. (We are still searching for a term to adequately describe this type of individual. For lack of a better term, I shall refer to him as the "unaffiliated student" or the "nontraditional student.")

The interests of the Council extend beyond this particular problem and include assistance with the evaluation of transfer students, aiding in determining college equivalency, institutional self-evaluation and evaluation of foreign student educational backgrounds. Because of the topic of this panel I will concentrate on the Council's concern for the unaffiliated student.

The Executive Director of the Council, Jack Arbolino, provided an indication of the importance with which the Board views this activity when after reviewing the need for doing something in this area of higher education, he stated: "The first step is to face the reality, as Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare John W. Gardner says, that 'our institutional arrangements for lifelong education are ridiculously inadequate'. After identifying these educational inadequacies, the next step is to provide a solution.

The Council on College-Level Examinations of the College Entrance Examination Board believes: That the traditional methods and present facilities of education just will not do; that the future calls for more education, and no end to education for all citizens; that flexibility, innovation, and independent study are essential in education; and finally, that academic credit by examination is a key to this flexibility, innovation, and independent study. The Board, therefore, is staking a major effort in time and money in establishing a national system of academic credit by examination."

One of the first actions of the Board in attempting to make operational the goals of the Council was to assume financial and policy responsibility for the Comprehensive College Tests from the developers of that program, ETS. In doing so, the Board acquired an operational program of 15 examinations which will form the nucleus of the Council's program. Before proceeding

to describe some of the Council's plans, let me quickly describe the Comprehensive College Test Program.

The Comprehensive College Tests

As I indicated earlier, the Comprehensive College Tests were developed at ETS to meet many of the same needs with which the Council is concerned. The program offers two basic types of examinations, General Examinations and Subject Examinations, on an institutional basis. By an institutional basis, we mean that the tests are administered by colleges and universities to students of their choosing and that students are not registered directly with ETS and do not take the tests at ETS sponsored centers throughout the country, as is the case with the College Board SAT's.

The General Examinations consist of five examinations over basic liberal arts areas - English Composition, Humanities, Mathematics, Natural Science, and Social Science-history. They are designed to measure undergraduate achievement in these areas. They do not attempt to measure advanced training in any specific area, but rather to determine a student's knowledge of fundamental facts and concepts, his ability to perceive relationships, and his understanding of the basic principles of the subject. The tests are designed to be administered as a battery and together involve six hours of testing time. They are objective, multiple-choice type tests, that yield a total of 13 scaled scores, a score on each of the five areas and two subscores on four of the five areas. Representative freshmen and sophomore norms based on a sample of students enrolled in two and four year colleges are available. The examinations can be used to measure learning experience in the more general sense and do not relate directly to particular course patterns of preparation. In addition to their use by colleges and universities, they are being used, on a contract basis, by the United States Armed Forces Institute as a replacement for the old college level GED tests, the tests of General Educational Development. As such they are given to military personnel and results are sent to colleges and universities as requested by the person taking the tests. The Commission on the Accreditation of Service Experiences of the American Council on Education has made recommendations for minimum standards for the awarding of credit with these examinations.

The Subject Examinations follow the more traditional pattern and are essentially end-of-course tests developed for widely taught undergraduate courses. They attempt to cover material commonly expected of students in undergraduate courses in the area. Each test is a 90 minute objective, multiple-choice test with an optional 90 minute essay test also available for use. Norms are based on samples of college students completing courses in the areas being tested. These examinations may be used by colleges to award credit specifically for the course in question.

The Plans of the Council

These plans were outlined brief description of the existing tests let me move to a discussion of the Plans for the Council. Although the Council only came into existence in June of 1965 and much of what will result from their efforts is as yet unknown, a number of general plans have been formulated.

These plans were outlined briefly by the Executive Director of the Council, Mr. Arbolino, in a Progress Report given wide distribution last month. The plans include the development of a large number of examinations, 65 within eight years and perhaps as many as 200 within another eight years. These examinations will be developed on the advice of a number of Panels that the Board plans to appoint. The Panels will represent broad areas such as Mathematics-Science, Foreign Language, Music and Fine Arts, and so on, and will advise the Board on the examinations needed, on the nature of the examinations and on standards for the examinations. A national administration of the examinations in the program will be offered, probably initially in 1967-68. Publications will be developed to assist the unaffiliated student in knowing what facilities are open to him, how he can take advantage of them and in general offer counseling assistance to him. Efforts will be made through research to learn more about this student, what his needs are, and how they can best be served. Extensive efforts will be made by the Board to, in Mr. Arbolino's words, "will make plain, without bombast or selling, the importance of providing more educational opportunities for more Americans; will encourage the academic community to contribute its talents, wisdom, and efforts; will establish a national program for the evaluation of those students not enrolled in a regular college curriculum or those students seeking to transfer from one institution to another; will expand as quickly as possible the present institutional program in which colleges assess the individual achievement of their own students; will provide materials, advice, and consultation on advisory services for unaffiliated students; and will provide a forum to explore experiments on how credit by examination might work in various circumstances."

In accomplishing these things the Board will be working under a grant from the Carnegie Corporation for $1,500,000. ETS has contributed the Comprehensive College Tests, developed at a cost of about a quarter of a million dollars. The Board has already invested a sizable amount of its own resources and will continue to do so.

Conclusion

It is hoped, by those of us working closely with the program, that this substantial effort on the part of the College Board, Carnegie Corporation and ETS will have a desirable and beneficial effect on the problems of evaluation of adult experience for the purposes of awarding credit. At the present time it is too early to know what the reaction will be from the individuals who are engaged in the out-of-classroom college level learning

experiences, from the institutions who must view these examinations as a basis for awarding credit and from the higher education community in general.

The experience of the College Board Advance Placement Program has certainly served to "break a trail" through the traditional resistance of college faculties to give credit for any learning that did not result from involvement in the traditional college classroom and credit pattern. Whether this trail will be wide enough to allow adults as well as bright high school students to walk it remains to be seen.

Mr. Lyons will tell you soon of some of the problems and difficulties involved in getting the unaffiliated student to come forward. The problems are major. In his report to the Trustees, Arbolino states: "About this project it has been said, 'If there is no need, lead". It has also been stated that it would be calamitous not to do it. At the other extreme, prudent osbervers ask, 'Where's the clientele?' or advise, 'Stay out. It's a swamp.'"

Recognizing that even with its best efforts the program may fail, the Board has determined that the nature of the problem and its possible implications for higher education in America are of such importance that it is "better to fail than to shirk a responsibility."

I would like to close by reading to you a letter I recently received that graphically illustrates both the need for a program of this anture and one of its purposes.

> "I work for the Army. I've been referred to you by the Armed Forces Institute.
>
> "My problem is that I've taken a number of college courses in my spare time. I was a non-matriculated student. I didn't follow a special pattern of study. I took courses at random.
>
> "I'll be looking for a position soon as a result of the closing of Army bases. If I tell a prospective employer that I've taken courses at random, I don't think he'd be interested. If I were to pass exams of general education at the level of a person who has had two years of college, I believe it would help me."

Now I don't know if this woman has had the necessary educational experience or has learned enough from her experience to demonstrate two years of college work or to receive college credit for it or not. I do feel, however, that she should have an opportunity to find out. It is our hope that this program can give her and others like her that opportunity. If it can, perhaps it will help to move Adult Education out of the "quiet sector" of higher education and into the thick of the battle where it ought to be.

Thank you.

Session 290
Burns

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